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AUTHOR Bennett, Susan M.
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ABSTRACT

Recent research on women's lives has emphasized the complex interactions between situational constraints in the family and the workplace. To examine the relationship of situational variables and personality characteristics to career-related self-efficacy expectations and life satisfaction in women, 94 college women completed a questionnaire eliciting demographic and life satisfaction information, and career-related self-efficacy expectations. Three personality measures used in addition were the Performance Self-Esteem Scale, the Bem Sex Role Inventory and the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory. Data were categorized by three age groups: young adult (18-24 years); adult (25-34 years); and mature adult (35 years and older). An analysis of the results showed that the young adult women were most confident about achieving career goals and most satisfied with their lives, while mature women were least confident and satisfied. However, mature women rated their present happiness and their expected happiness from age 45 on more positively than either of the younger categories. Adult women were highest in performance self-esteem. The incidence of traditional femininity increased with age. The estimates of career-related self-efficacy and life satisfaction were highest for young adult women. Adult women were least happy with their rate of career advancement and tended to be anxious and assertive. Androgynous women were more confident of successfully completing training and launching a new career than either feminine or undifferentiated women. (BL)

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Personality and Situation in the Prediction of Women's Career-Related Self-Efficacy Expectations and Life Satisfaction

Susan M. Bennett
The Pennsylvania State University

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Not for citation without the author's consent. Requests for further information should be sent to Susan M. Bennett, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, The Pennsylvania State University, Beaver Campus, Monaca, PA 15061

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Personality and Situation in the Prediction of Women's Career-Related Self-Efficacy Expectations and Life Satisfaction

A common theme in recent research on women's lives is the necessity of viewing the life course as a result of complex interactions between situational constraints in the family and in the workplace. For example, Perun and Bielby (1981) have stressed the value of a paradigm for women's occupational behavior which permits integration of complex work and family cycles; Rossi (1980) has emphasized the importance of physical changes, the timing of life events, and work-family interactions in producing stress and influencing women's physical well-being; and Giele (1982) has insisted on the need for fine-grained analysis of interconnections between work history, expected and unexpected life events, and intervening structural conditions or adaptive mechanisms in determining actual sources of satisfaction in women's lives.

The present investigation was a pilot study designed to probe the relationships of situational variables and personality characteristics to two aspects of career-related behavior in women: efficacy expectations, or confidence regarding achievement of present and future career goals, and life-satisfaction. The underlying purpose of the study was to begin identifying some of the actual sources of satisfaction and well-being in women's lives--particularly with respect to satisfaction in specific career-related domains--and to clarify the relationships, if any, between satisfaction in these domains and global ratings of happiness.

Previous research has demonstrated the usefulness of investigating the joint influence of situational and personality variables on various career-related behaviors. In a study of career persistence and pattern among young married women, Stewart (1980) found that the situational constraint of responsibility for young children appeared to set broad limits on career-related behaviors, while personality variables

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appeared to influence career choices within those limits. Stake, (1979_b) in a study of career commitment, found that a personality variable, performance self-esteem, mediated the relationship between career commitment and situational variables (role factors) such as marital, parental, and work status.

Ideally the situational variables examined in a study of this sort should be refined variables based on detailed chronologies of life events and work histories as recommended by Giele (1982). For this pilot study, however, a limited number of simple variables reflecting family and occupational situations were selected with one major criterion in mind: relevance to women from 18 to 80 who were engaged in a wide variety of careers. The term "career" is used not in the limited sense of occupational or professional role, but in the expanded sense which includes other work and central life roles (e.g., technician, secretary, housewife) which accumulate over time (Hall, 1976; Louis, 1981).

Personality variables were selected on the basis of previous research and theoretical considerations indicating their relevance to women's career-related behavior and/or life satisfaction. Measures of assertive behavior were included because, as Betz and Hackett (1981) have noted, assertive skills are essential to success in many occupations and may have an important bearing on self-efficacy expectations. A measure of performance self-esteem, or self-evaluation of performance in achievement settings, was also included because it has been shown to mediate the relationship between career commitment and role factors for women of college age and above (Stake, 1979_a; 1979_b). Finally, measures of traditional masculinity, traditional femininity, and sex-role orientation were included because they have been found to be better predictors of striving in achievement domains than gender itself (Orlofsky and Stake, 1981) and because a traditional feminine orientation has been linked with socialization experiences which are not likely to develop a good sense of self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

In this exploratory study women between the ages of 18 and 57 who had sought out either a credit course or a noncredit workshop potentially perceived as relevant to career development provided situational data on family and occupation, self-evaluations of personality, and self-estimates of career-related efficacy and life satisfaction. Since previous research has indicated that career indecision and fear associated with personality characteristics such as

low assertiveness may be greater among adult women than among college women (Slaney, Stafford, & Russell, 1981) and since little is known about relationships between personality and life patterns among women who are no longer heavily constrained by responsibility for young children (Stewart, 1980), variations in situation, personality, and linkages between situation, personality and life satisfaction were examined separately for cohorts of young adult, adult, and mature adult women. It was expected that marked differences in situational and personality predictors of self-efficacy and life satisfaction would be found for women in different age categories because the responsibilities and life experiences of young women in college differ so greatly from those of adult women with young children and from those of mature adult women. It was also anticipated that assertiveness, performance self-esteem, and an androgynous sex-role orientation (Bem, 1977, Bennett, 1979) would be positively associated with career-related self-efficacy and life satisfaction, whereas a traditionally feminine sex-role orientation would be negatively associated with these same outcomes.

Method

Subjects

Women students at the Beaver and New Kensington campuses of the Pennsylvania State University voluntarily participated in the study during school year 1981-82. Of the 94 women in the total sample, 43 were undergraduates enrolled in introductory psychology or introductory women's studies, 9 were graduate students enrolled in a school mental health course, and 42 were enrolled in a non-credit continuing education seminar "Issues for Women".

All of the subjects were told about the study and given packets containing the research instruments during a regular session of their respective classes. Subjects in the introductory psychology course then gave their informed consent and completed the instruments in class. They were given nominal course credit for participating in the study. All other subjects completed the instruments on their own time and returned the packet at the following class session. The interpretation of the instruments was then discussed at length in all participating classes and, after scoring, the instruments were returned to all subjects who claimed them by using their coded identification numbers.

Instruments

Each subject completed a questionnaire and three personality measures. The questionnaire given to undergraduates elicited information concerning age, family situation (i.e., marital status, number of children, present residence), education, occupation (i.e., housewife/homemaker, specific other/additional occupation(s), hours per week employed outside the home), life satisfaction, and career-related self-efficacy expectations. Life satisfaction was measured by two series of questions, the first of which asked subjects to rate their degree of satisfaction with seven specific aspects of life (e.g., "amount of time available for leisure activities"; "present occupation(s)"; "rate of occupational/professional/educational advancement") on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The second series of questions measuring life satisfaction asked subjects to rate their lives at present and at six specific periods in the past or future (e.g., "as a child of 12 or younger"; "as a young adult of 20 to 30"; "as a senior citizen of 65 and above") on a ten-point self-anchoring ladder scale ranging from 10, representing the

"ideal, happy life," to 1, representing the "worst possible life" (Psychology Today, 1972). Career-related self-efficacy was measured with two items which asked subjects to indicate their degree of confidence that they would "achieve. . . present career goals" and that they "could successfully complete any necessary training and launch a new career" on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all confident) to 5 (very confident).

Questionnaires given to women enrolled in graduate and non-credit courses did not include the item concerning present place of residence.

The following personality measures were administered to all subjects:

(1) The Performance Self-Esteem Scale (PSES, Stake, 1979_a) measured self-evaluation of performance in achievement settings, an aspect of self-concept distinct from measures of social self-esteem and defensiveness. Subjects indicated the extent to which each of 46 items (e.g., "able to give orders"; "enjoys a challenge") was characteristic of them on a seven-point Likert-type scale. PSES scores have been found to be related to perceptions of past compliments for ability and performance among undergraduates and to extent of career commitment among female business students and business alumnae (Stake, 1979_a; 1979_b). Three scores were derived from PSES responses: the PSES Positive Score (the sum of ratings for 27 positive items), the PSES Negative Scores (the sum of ratings for 13 negative items), and the PSES Total Score (the difference between the sum of the ratings for positive and negative items).

(2) The Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI, Bem, 1974; 1979) measured traditional masculinity/instrumentality, traditional femininity/expressiveness, and sex-role orientation based on subject's endorsement of 20 positively-valued masculine characteristics (e.g., "forceful"; "willing to take risks") and 20 positively-valued feminine characteristics (e.g., "affectionate "; "gentle"). Items were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale. Standard scores for masculinity and femininity were derived after summing the appropriate item ratings (Bem, 1979). Subjects were also assigned to one of four sex-role categories by a median split of raw BSRI masculinity and femininity scores for the full sample. Those subjects scoring above the median on both scales were classified as androgynous (balanced in their relatively high levels of masculine and feminine personality characteristics); those scoring above the median on either the mascu-

linity or femininity scale, but not on both scales, were classified as traditionally masculine or traditionally feminine, respectively; and those scoring below the median on both scales were classified as undifferentiated with respect to sex-role orientation.

Significant overlap was anticipated between BSRI and PSES scores because nine items from the BSRI masculinity scale, three items from the BSRI femininity scale, and numerous items synonymous with or opposite to BSRI items were incorporated in the PSES.

(3) The Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory (GRAI, Gambrill & Richey, 1975) measured two aspects of assertive behavior: degree of discomfort/anxiety and probability of responding assertively. Subjects evaluated both aspects of their behavior for each of 40 situations (e.g., "ask a favor of someone"; "apply for a job"; "request the return of borrowed items") on two five-point scales ranging from 1 (no discomfort) to 5 (very much discomfort) and from 1 (always do it) to 5 (never do it). Higher scores on the GRAI Discomfort Scale indicate greater discomfort, whereas higher scores on the GRAI Response Probability Scale, indicate less probability of responding assertively. Subjects were also assigned to one of four assertion "profiles" on the basis of their scores on both scales: 1) unassertive subjects were high in discomfort, but low in response probability; 2) unassertive, but "don't care" subjects were low in discomfort and in response probability; 3) anxious performers were high in discomfort, but also high in response probability; and 4) assertive subjects were low in discomfort, but high in response probability. These categories were defined by Gambrill and Richey (1975) based on the mean of the score distribution for each scale in a sample of 313 undergraduates at U.C. Berkeley.

Analytical Procedures

All data were summarized separately for subjects in each of three age categories: young adult/college women from 18-24 years of age (n=43), adult women between 25 and 34 years of age (n=27), and mature adult women 35 years of age and above (n=24). The average age of women in each of these three categories was 18.9 years, 29.5 years, and 45.2 years, respectively.

To examine career-related self-efficacy, life satisfaction, and personality as a function of age, one way analyses of variance and *a posteriori* comparisons of group means

were computed across the three age categories for all efficacy, satisfaction, and personality variables.

Multiple regression analyses were done to test the relationships between each of seven measures of career-related self-efficacy and life satisfaction and a set of seven situation and personality variables selected following examination of intercorrelations among all variables. The seven measures of self-efficacy and life satisfaction selected for inclusion as dependent variables in the regression analyses included self-efficacy ratings concerning probable success in a present career and a new career, three ratings of life satisfaction with regard to occupation, and two ratings of life satisfaction during specific time periods--the present, and the next age period. The seven variables selected for inclusion as independent variables in the regression analyses were: age; marital status (2=currently married, 1=not married); hours per week employment outside the home (4=40 or more, 3=21-40, 2=fewer than 20, 1=none); student status (2=a student, 1=not a student); present residence (2=not with parents, 1=with parents); PSES Total Score; and GRAI Response Probability.

Three sets of multiple regressions were performed for each measure of efficacy and satisfaction. Relationships were first tested for all subjects and subsequently retested separately for young adult subjects and for the adult and mature adult subjects combined (n=51). Since data on present residence were available only for the young adult subjects, this item was excluded from all regression analyses involving the adults and mature adults. Marital status was excluded from all regression analyses for young adults as none of the women in this age category were married.

The selected variables were forced to enter each regression equation one at a time in order of decreasing tolerance, and all were treated as a block in computing statistics for changes in the equation. The significance of effects was tested by partial sums of squares, controlling for the effects of all other independent variables as each effect was tested.

Finally, since sex-role orientation and the GRAI assertion profile were both categorical rather than ordinal or interval data, their relationships with the career-related self-efficacy and life-satisfaction variables were evaluated by different procedures than the other personality scores. In separate analyses of variance, group means for each measure of efficacy and satisfaction were first com-

pared across four categories of sex-role orientation and then compared across four GRAI assertion profiles for all subjects combined.

Results

Comparisons Across Age Categories

Background data indicating characteristics of the family situation, education, and occupation of women in each age category are summarized in Table 1. Obvious contrasts across the three age groupings include an increase from young adult to mature adult women in percentage of subjects who were, or had been married, who had a larger number of children, who considered themselves to be housewives/homemakers, who had completed higher levels of education, who were employed, and who were employed more hours per week; as well as a decrease from young adult to adult women in percentage of subjects who considered themselves to be students.

Table 1 about here.

The results of one way analysis of variance and *a posteriori* comparisons of means across age categories for all career-related self-efficacy, life satisfaction, and personality variables are reported in Table 2. As shown in the table, young women were generally the most confident about achieving career goals and the most satisfied with various aspects and periods of their lives, whereas mature women were generally the least confident and satisfied. The women in these two age categories differed significantly with respect to confidence about achieving their present career goals, satisfaction with their freedom to pursue long-range occupational or professional goals, and happiness during the first 45 years of life. In contrast, mature women rated their happiness at present and from age 45 on more positively than women in either of the younger categories. Adult women did not differ significantly from mature adult women on any measure, but were significantly less satisfied with their rate of occupational advancement and less happy from ages 20-30 than young adult women.

Table 2 about here.

Although no significant differences occurred between women in any two age categories on the personality variables reported in Table 2, adult women scored notably higher in performance self-esteem than young adult and mature adult women. In contrast, mature adult women scored considerably lower in discomfort about acting assertively than women in either of the two younger age categories.

Comparisons of BSRI Sex-Role Orientation and GRAI Assertion Profile across age categories are reported in Table 3. No significant differences were found by χ^2 analysis (df=2) of the frequency distribution for any given sex-role orientation or assertion profile as compared with the frequency distribution for all other sex-role orientations or assertion profiles combined. With respect to the BSRI data, it should be noted that the incidence of traditional femininity increased with age, whereas the incidence of undifferentiated sex-role orientation decreased. With respect to the GRAI data, it should be noted that the incidence of unassertive behavior was lower and the incidence of anxious performance of assertive behavior was higher among adult women than among either younger or older women.

Table 3 about here.

Prediction of Career-Related Self-Efficacy

Results of multiple regression analyses to identify situation and personality variables contributing significantly to the prediction of career-related self-efficacy are summarized in the upper portion of Table 4. For all subjects, performance self-esteem was positively related to confidence about achieving career goals at present and in the future, whereas age was negatively associated with confidence about achieving present career goals. Performance self-esteem was also positively related to both measures of confidence about career goals among young women, and marginally related to confidence about launching a new career among adult and mature adult women. Two additional predictors emerged in the separate analyses for younger and older women: residence with parents was positively associated with confidence about present career goals among young women and age was marginally negatively associated with confidence about present career goals among adult and mature adult women.

Table 1

Characteristics of Young Women, Adult Women, and Mature Adult Women

	Young Women n=43		Adult Women n=27		Mature Adult Women n=24	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Marital Status						
Never Married	43	100	9	33	1	4
Divorced/Separated	-	-	2	7	4	17
Widowed	-	-	-	-	3	13
Married/Remarried	-	-	16	59	16	67
Education Completed						
High School	5	12	1	4	7	29
Some College	38	88	9	33	9	38
College	-	-	6	22	0	00
Some Graduate Work	-	-	8	30	6	25
Graduate Degree	-	-	3	11	2	8
Housewife/Homemaker						
Yes	-	-	13	48	19	79
No	41	100	14	52	5	21
Hours per Week Employment Outside Home						
None	24	56	2	7	-	-
Fewer than 20	10	23	3	11	4	18
21-40	9	21	14	52	17	74
More than 40	-	-	8	30	2	9
Occupation						
None	30	70	2	7	2	8
Professional with M.D., Ph.D., etc.	-	-	1	4	2	8
Nurse, Teacher, Counselor, etc.	1	2	11	41	7	29
Businessperson (Manager, Proprietor, etc)	3	7	5	19	7	29
Industrial Worker or Technician	-	-	2	7	2	8
Secretary	9	21	2	7	4	17
Student Status						
Not a Student	3	5	25	93	24	100
A Student	40	95	2	7	-	-
Present Residence[a]						
With Parents	25	61	-	-	-	-
With Friends	1	2	-	-	-	-
In Dormitory/Boarding House	15	36	-	-	-	-
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Number of Children	-	-	.96	1.32	2.50	1.64

Note. Underlined numbers in the n columns identify items which were not answered by all subjects in that age category. In almost all such cases, subjects indicated that the items they did not complete were not applicable to their situation.

[a]This item only appeared on the questionnaire given to undergraduates.

Table 2

Career-Related Self-Efficacy Expectations, Life Satisfaction, and Personality Characteristics of Young Women, Adult Women, and Mature Adult Women

	Young Women n=43			Adult Women n=27			Mature Adult Women n=24			Signi of
	n[a]	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	M	SD	F
Self-Efficacy										
Present Career	41	3.70_b	.92	25	3.60	1.00	23	2.96_b	.93	**
New Career	41	4.00	1.03	26	3.89	1.03	23	3.30	1.11	*
Life Satisfaction										
Division of Labor	41	3.62	1.15	22	3.22	1.35	21	3.38	1.07	-
Time for Leisure	43	3.07	1.16	27	2.74	1.37	24	2.38	.88	*
Time for Family	43	3.30	1.19	26	3.19	1.27	23	3.13	1.33	-
Present Occupation	38	3.53	1.06	27	3.07	1.24	24	3.13	1.30	-
Rate of Occ/Prof./Ed.Adv.	43	3.46_b	0.97	27	2.67_b	1.39	23	2.83	1.44	*
Pursuit of Occ. Goals	41	3.90_b	1.28	27	3.22	1.42	24	2.38_b	1.21	***
Time for Prof. Activs.	26	2.84	1.22	22	3.32	1.04	21	2.95	.92	-
At Present	43	6.58	1.78	27	6.89	1.79	23	7.15	1.61	-
In Childhood	43	7.56	2.05	27	6.96	2.37	23	6.72	2.89	-
In Adolescence	43	6.58	1.87	27	5.66	2.59	23	5.54	2.35	-
From Age 20-30	41	8.49_{bc}	1.09	27	6.77_c	1.99	22	6.05_b	1.94	***
From Age 31-45	41	8.75_b	1.04	27	8.30	1.32	23	7.39_b	1.92	**
From Age 46-64	41	8.46	1.53	27	8.43	1.87	23	8.83	1.29	-
Age 65 and Above	42	7.73	2.20	26	8.17	1.98	23	8.91	1.18	-
Personality Characteristics										
PSES Positive Chars.	43	134.81	22.24	26	138.6	15.59	24	135.2	21.7	-
PSES Negative Chars.	43	56.72	22.41	26	46.0	13.03	24	50.8	11.2	*
PSES Total Score	43	82.79	22.95	26	92.7	24.05	24	84.4	29.1	-
BSRI Masculinity	43	46.42	10.50	27	47.4	10.39	24	44.1	13.3	-
BSRI Femininity	43	54.70	9.79	27	54.3	9.73	24	57.8	9.6	-
GRAI Discomfort	43	111.56	25.78	27	100.7	23.36	24	93.4	28.5	*
GRAI Probable Assert.	43	110.79	17.78	27	104.7	15.91	22	110.0	17.0	-

Note. Common subscripts (b, c) identify group means differing significantly at $p < .05$ by Scheffé's test.

[a]Numbers in the n columns indicate the number of women in each age category who completed each item or instrument. In almost all cases, subjects indicated that the items they did not complete were not applicable to their situation.

*$p < .05$.

**$p < .01$.

***$p < .001$.

Table 3

Sex-Role Orientation and Assertion Profile
among Young Women, Adult Women, and Mature Adult Women

	Young Women n=43		Adult Women n=27		Mature Adult Women n=24	
	n	%	n	%	n[a]	%
BSRI Sex-Role Orientation						
Traditionally Masculine	7	16	6	22	4	17
Traditionally Feminine	8	19	7	26	10	42
Androgynous	12	28	7	26	6	25
Undifferentiated	16	37	7	26	4	17
GRAI Assertion Profile						
Unassertive	25	58	9	33	11	50
Anxious Performer	7	16	8	30	2	9
Unassertive, but doesn't care	6	14	4	15	4	18
Assertive	5	12	6	22	5	23

Note. Differences between young women, adult women, and mature adult women in numbers of subjects with a given sex-role orientation or assertion profile as opposed to numbers of subjects with all other sex-role orientations or assertion profiles were tested by chi-square.

[a]Two mature adult women failed to complete the GRAI and were excluded from this analysis.

Table 4 about here.

Situation and personality variables which failed to relate significantly to measures of career-related self-efficacy when the effects of all other independent variables were controlled include: marital status, hours per week employment, student status, and GRAI Response Probability.

Prediction of Life Satisfaction

Results of multiple regression analyses to identify situation and personality variables contributing significantly to the prediction of five measures of life satisfaction are reported in the lower portion of Table 4. Separate analyses were done for all women, for young women, and for adult and mature adult women combined. The first measure, satisfaction with all present occupations (including homemaking), was negatively associated with two situation variables, hours per week employment outside the home and not residing with parents, but only for young women; the second measure, satisfaction with rate of occupational/professional/educational advancement (excluding homemaking), was associated with student status, but only for all women; and the third measure, satisfaction with freedom to pursue long-range occupational/professional goals, was positively associated with probability of responding assertively both for all women and for young women alone. Hours per week employment was the only variable related significantly to satisfaction with pursuit of long-range goals among adult and mature-adult women.

Only two variables, one an indicator of situation and the other a personality scale, contributed significantly to the prediction of the fourth and fifth measures of life satisfaction, the self-anchored ladder ratings of present happiness and anticipated happiness in the next years of life. Both present and anticipated happiness were positively associated with performance self-esteem for young adult women and present happiness was positively associated with being married among adult and mature adult women combined. One variable, age, failed to relate significantly to any of the five measures of life satisfaction for women of any age category when the effects of all other independent variables were controlled.

Comparisons Across Categories of Sex-Role Orientation

One way analysis of variance and a posteriori comparisons

Table 4

Situation and Personality Variables Contributing Significantly to the Prediction of Career-Related Self-Efficacy and Life Satisfaction Scales among Young Adult, Adult, and Mature Adult Women

	All Women (df=1,87)			Young Adult Women (df=1,36)			Adult/Mature Adult Women (df=1,44)		
	Predictor	F	p	Predictor	F	p	Predictor	F	p
Self-Efficacy									
Present Career	PSES Total Score (+)	8.02,	<.01	PSES Total Score (+)	6.90,	<.02	Age (-)	3.51,	<.07
	Age (-)	4.28,	<.05	Present Residence (-)	6.79,	<.02			
New Career	PSES Total Score (+)	6.90,	<.02	PSES Total Score (+)	4.61,	<.04	PSES Total Score (+)	3.57,	<.07
Life Satisfaction									
Present Occupation	-	-	-	Hrs. per Week Employment (-)	10.78,	<.01	-	-	-
				Present Residence (-)	4.04,	<.06	-	-	-
Rate of Occ./Prof./ Ed. Adv.	Student Status (+)	5.97,	<.02	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pursuit of Occ. Goals	GRAI Response Probability (-)	4.20,	<.05	GRAI Response Probability (-)	9.12,	<.01	Hrs. per Week Employment (+)	3.96,	<.06
At Present	-	-	-	PSES Total Score (+)	3.71,	<.07	Marital Status (+)	4.29,	<.05
In Next Age Period	-	-	-	PSES Total Score (+)	5.31,	<.03	-	-	-

Note. Positive and negative signs in parentheses indicate the direction of the relationship between a predictor and the measure of self-efficacy or life satisfaction in any given multiple regression analysis.

of means across four categories of sex-role orientation for all subjects revealed significant differences between category means on only two of the seven measures of career-related self-efficacy and life satisfaction examined. As shown in Table 5, androgynous women were significantly more confident of successfully completing training and launching a new career than either traditionally feminine or undifferentiated women. Androgynous women also rated themselves significantly happier at present than did undifferentiated women.

Table 5

Mean Scores on Career-Related Self-Efficacy and Life Satisfaction Scales as a Function of BSRI Sex-Role Orientation Among Women

	BSRI Sex-Role Orientation				F
	Androg (25)	Trad Masc (17)	Trad Fem (23)	Undiff (27)	Ratio
Self-Efficacy					
New Career	4.33_{ab}	4.00	3.48_{a}	3.44_{b}	**
Life Satisfaction					
At Present	7.64_{a}	6.97	6.63	6.11_{a}	*

Note. Numbers in parentheses are group ns. Only variables with a significant F ratio for the one way analysis of variance across groups are reported. Common subscripts (a, b) identify group means differing significantly at $p < .05$ by Scheffé's test.

*$p < .05$.

**$p < .01$.

Parallel analyses across four GRAI assertion profiles for all subjects revealed no significant differences between category means on the seven measures of self-efficacy and life satisfaction.

Self-Efficacy and Life Satisfaction

Interrelationships among the seven measures of self-efficacy and life satisfaction selected as dependent variables for the multiple regression analyses were evaluated for all women. Moderate positive correlations were found between the two measures of career-related self-efficacy (r=.51), among the three measures of life satisfaction in career-related domains (rs=.55, .38, and .48), and between the two global measures of happiness (r=.44), all of which were statistically significant at $p < .001$. Of 10 intercorrelations between the two measures of self-efficacy and five measures of career-related life satisfaction, however, only two relationships were statistically significant: confidence about achieving present career goals was positively associated with satisfaction regarding rate of occupational/professional/educational advancement (r=.26, $p < .05$) as well as with satisfaction regarding freedom to pursue long-range occupational/professional goals (r=.46, $p < .001$). Only one of six intercorrelations between the three measures of career-related satisfaction and two measures of global happiness was statistically significant: satisfaction with present occupations (including homemaking) was positively associated with happiness at present (r=.24, $p < .05$).

Discussion

Results of the various analyses reported here indicate that women in the three age categories studied differed markedly with respect to family and occupational situation and with respect to career-related self-efficacy and life satisfaction, but not with respect to personality. The adult and mature adult women bore considerable responsibility for household and family in addition to working substantial numbers of hours per week outside the home. Their estimates of career-related self-efficacy and life satisfaction were considerably lower than those of the young women, none of whom were married and most of whom--whether residing with parents or elsewhere--were fully occupied with college study or with a combination of study and part-time work. While the greatest contrasts in situation and satisfaction generally occurred between young adults and mature adults, women between 25 and 34 years-of-age, presumably mothers of younger children than the mature adult women, were least satisfied with their rate of occupational/professional advancement and tended (the percentage differences were not statistically significant) to be anxious, yet assertive rather than unassertive more of often than the younger and older women. For women in all three cohorts, retrospective ratings of happiness were lower than ratings of present and probable future happiness.

As anticipated, personality and/or situational variables were positively associated with the seven measures of career-related self-efficacy, if not for all women, at least for young adults or for adults and mature adults combined. In general, the expectation that assertiveness, performance self-esteem, and an androgynous sex-role orientation would be positively associated with self-efficacy and life satisfaction was bourne out by the data. But each personality measure tended to be associated with different outcomes, and several outcomes--the measures of satisfaction in career-related domains--were not associated with any of the personality variables. Performance self-esteem, a self-estimate of competence in achievement settings, was higher in women who expressed greater confidence about attaining present career goals, and in successfully starting a new career, as well as in young adult women who rated their lives at present and in the next age period as closer to their ideal of happiness. In contrast, tendency to respond assertively in a variety of situations was higher in those women, especially in young adult women, who expressed more satisfaction with their freedom to pursue long-range occupational goals. Sex-role orientation was associated with several of the same outcomes as performance self-esteem: women with an androgynous sex-role orientation not only expressed greater confidence about attaining present career goals than women with a traditionally feminine or undifferentiated orientation, but also rated their present lives as closer to their ideal of happiness than women with an undifferentiated orientation.

The strategy of repeating multiple regression analyses for young adult women and for adult and mature adult women combined was effective in highlighting age-related differences in the specific variables related to each measure of self-efficacy and life satisfaction. For example, married adult and mature adult women rated their present lives as closer to their ideal of happiness than did unmarried women in the same age categories, and young women still residing with their parents expressed greater confidence in achieving their present career goals and greater satisfaction with their present occupation (college study) than did young women residing away from home in dormitories or boarding houses. Both of the family situational variables in these examples--marital status and present residence--are ones with relevance only to women in particular age categories, and were entered into the regression analyses only for women in those particular categories. The strategy of repeating analyses for young adults and for adults and mature adults combined was also effective in

highlighting differences in the way a single variable may function for women differing in age, in associated family and occupational responsibilities, and possibly in desire for challenge and productivity. Thus, hours per week employment was negatively associated with satisfaction with present occupation (college study) among young women, but positively associated with satisfaction regarding freedom to pursue occupational goals among adult and mature adult women.

This pilot study has demonstrated the relevance of specific situational and personality variables to women's self-ratings of efficacy and life satisfaction, and in doing so, has taken a first step toward clarifying actual sources of well-being in the lives of young adult, adult, and mature adult women. It has also illustrated in a small way the complexity of the domains of satisfaction and well-being in women's lives and the necessity of examining separately the sources of satisfaction in each domain. The data from this relatively small sample suggest that women's global ratings of happiness are influenced to some extent by family situation--especially by marriage--and by personality--especially by very positive self-evaluation of competence in achievement settings--but that global feelings of happiness were largely independent of confidence with respect to achieving career goals and of satisfaction within specific career-related domains. This raises a number of questions about the relevance of career-related concerns to women's overall sense of well-being.

It is recommended that further research undertaken to pursue such questions should focus on women in the adult and mature adult age categories. Sample sizes should be large enough to permit comparison of outcomes for women with different career patterns or styles such as those described by Louis (1981). Progress toward more complete explanations of women's satisfaction and well-being will probably require collection of refined data on work histories and life events as well as data on satisfaction in varied domains of activity. Finally, Giele (1982) has delineated a refined conceptual model for tracing connections between life events through intervening conditions to reactions in specific domains which may be extremely useful.

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